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SUBJECT: REACTIONS TO ISRAELI INCURSIONS IN GAZA, U.S. VETO

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SUMMARY  
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1. (U) The Israeli operations in Gaza prompted demonstrations in the Baqa'a refugee camp near Amman October 5 that resulted in clashes with Jordanian security forces. The Jordanian government has continued its call for a halt to incursions in Gaza and for renewed effort on the peace process. The Lower House of Parliament issued a statement condemning Israeli military operations. The U.S. veto of the U.N. Security Council resolution on Gaza was reported too late for extensive commentary, but we expect the veto will be the focus of strong criticism and popular emotion. Report on 10/6 EAC meeting septel. END SUMMARY.

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GOJ VIEWS ON GAZA INCURSIONS  
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2. (U) Responding to a negative mood in Jordan, King Abdullah and Foreign Minister Marwan Muashar both took time during their travel overseas to denounce recent Israeli incursions into northern Gaza. According to the local press, the King called for an immediate end to the Israeli offensive during a meeting with British Prime Minister Tony Blair on October 5. The King reportedly also called on Palestinians to make a concerted effort to help create a favorable climate for the resumption of peace negotiations. Muashar made similar comments during a joint press conference with Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Morantinos.

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MPs SOUND OFF  
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3. (U) The Lower House of Parliament also denounced Israel's actions in Gaza. The press reported that a statement issued by Parliament and signed by House Speaker Abdul Hadi Majali characterized the Israeli actions a "horrific massacre and cowardly terrorist act against the defenseless Palestinian people." The statement called on the international community to intervene in order to end the Israeli offensive. During Charge's lunch October 6 for MPs returning from a recent International Visitor program, four lower house members interrupted their discussion of the benefits of their meetings in the U.S., and harangued A/DCM over the alleged injustice of the U.S. veto.

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INCURSIONS IGNITE DEMONSTRATIONS  
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4. (SBU) Fueled by anger at the continuing incursions in Gaza, demonstrators clashed with Jordanian security forces in the Baqa'a refugee camp on the evening of October 5. The unauthorized demonstration, planned at least one day in advance, involved between 100 to 500 young men who gathered at the Baqa'a market at 2130 Jordan time and moved to a main street where the demonstrators started setting tires on fire in an attempt to block the main entrance to the camp from the Amman-Irbid highway. The camp police garrison fired tear-gas. Camp notables assisted in calming the demonstrators, who dispersed at 2300 local. According to sources in the Jordanian Public Security Directorate, three persons were injured, including one policeman. Six demonstrators were arrested. According to UNRWA, there have been no other Gaza related demonstrations in Jordanian camps in the last week.

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REACTIONS TO U.S. VETO  
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5. (SBU) A local daily - Al Arab Al Yawm - led with a story on the U.S. veto. The headline reads, "Americans Veto Cessation of Gaza Massacre." POL FSN spoke October 6 with a moderate Jordanian contact who, out of character, delved into a condemnation of the U.S. veto as something "disgusting" that Americans should be "ashamed of." The late vote in the UNSC did not give columnists the opportunity to ventilate their views, but we can expect extreme criticism in the days

ahead.

16. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.

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HALE